

Obituary

Dr. Francis B. Gordon

Dr. Francis B. Gordon and his wife, Mary, died when swept into the sea as they were abandoning the burning ship *Eurygenes* on October 19, 1973. Dr. Gordon was on his way to join the group at the Institute of Ophthalmology in London on a project of research into the role of cell-mediated immune mechanisms in human chlamydial disease.

Dr. Gordon graduated BSc in Biology in the University of Chicago, then PhD in Bacteriology and MD in 1937, rising to Professor of Bacteriology. Subsequently he was Director of the Department of Microbiology in the Naval Medical Research Institute, Bethesda, Maryland.

His early work was with polio virus and subsequently with influenza. His main contributions were in the study of chlamydial agents. In the early stages of this work he devised a system of separation of *Chlamydia* based on neutralization with hyperimmune chicken sera. Subsequently he established the division

of *Chlamydia* into subgroups A and B on the basis of the morphology and glycogen content of their inclusions. He was the first to grow the agent of trachoma in cell cultures. With his collaborators in London the isolation of the agents of trachoma and paratrachoma was carried out from clinical material. This has led to isolation of *Chlamydia* in irradiated McCoy cell culture being reduced to the simplicity of a routine procedure.

The recent advances in understanding the role of subgroup A *Chlamydia* in causing urethritis, cervicitis, proctitis, etc., have thus followed Dr. Gordon's original contributions.

Those who had the privilege of knowing this fine gentleman, and of working with this outstanding scientist, came rapidly to appreciate his leadership and integrity and share with his family in their deep loss.

Barrie R. Jones